

# WITTEN DEFORMATION OF RAY-SINGER ANALYTIC TORSION

MAXIM BRAVERMAN

August, 1994

**ABSTRACT.** Let  $F$  be a flat vector bundle over a compact Riemannian manifold  $M$  and let  $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a self-indexing Morse function. Let  $g^F$  be a smooth Euclidean metric on  $F$ , let  $g_t^F = e^{-2tf} g^F$  and let  $\rho^{RS}(t)$  be the Ray-Singer analytic torsion of  $F$  associated to the metric  $g_t^F$ . Assuming that  $\nabla f$  satisfies the Morse-Smale transversality conditions, we provide an asymptotic expansion for  $\log \rho^{RS}(t)$  for  $t \rightarrow \infty$  of the form  $a_0 + a_1 t + b \log(\frac{t}{\pi}) + o(1)$ . We present explicit formulae for coefficients  $a_0, a_1$  and  $b$ . In particular, we show that  $b$  is a half integer.

## 0. INTRODUCTION

**0.1. The Ray-Singer analytic torsion.** Let  $M$  be a compact manifold of dimension  $n$  and let  $F$  be a flat vector bundle on  $M$ . Let  $g^F$  and  $g^{TM}$  be smooth metrics on  $F$  and  $TM$  respectively.

In [RS] Ray and Singer introduced a numerical invariant of these data which is called the *Ray-Singer analytic torsion* of  $F$  and which we shall denote by  $\rho^{RS}$ .

**0.2. The Witten deformation.** Suppose  $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is a Morse function. For  $t > 0$ , we denote by  $g_t^F$  the smooth metric on  $F$

$$(0.1) \quad g_t^F = e^{-2tf} g^F.$$

Let  $\rho^{RS}(t)$  be the Ray-Singer torsion on  $F$  associated to the metrics  $g_t^F$  and  $g^{TM}$ .

Denote by  $\nabla f$  the gradient vector field of  $f$  with respect to the metric  $g^{TM}$ . Let  $B$  be the finite set of zeroes of  $\nabla f$ .

We shall assume that the following conditions are satisfied (cf. [BFK3, page 5]):

- (1)  $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is a self-indexing Morse function (i.e.  $f(x) = \text{index}(x)$  for any critical point  $x$  of  $f$ ).

---

1991 *Mathematics Subject Classification.* Primary: 58G26.

*Key words and phrases.* Analytic torsion, Witten deformation, Asymptotic expansion, Ray-Singer metric, Milnor metric.

- (2) The gradient vector field  $\nabla f$  satisfies the Smale transversality conditions [Sm1, Sm2] (for any two critical points  $x$  and  $y$  of  $f$  the stable manifold  $W^s(x)$  and the unstable manifold  $W^u(y)$ , with respect to  $\nabla f$ , intersect transversally).
- (3) For any  $x \in B$ , the metric  $g^F$  is flat near  $B$  and there is a system of coordinates  $y = (y^1, \dots, y^n)$  centered at  $x$  such that near  $x$

$$(0.2) \quad g^{TM} = \sum_{i=1}^n |dy^i|^2, \quad f(y) = f(x) - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{\text{index}(x)} |y^i|^2 + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=\text{index}(x)+1}^n |y^i|^2.$$

**0.3. Asymptotic expansion of the torsion.** Burghlea, Friedlander and Kap-peler ([BFK3]) have shown that the function  $\log \rho^{RS}(t)$  has asymptotic expansion for  $t \rightarrow \infty$  of the form

$$(0.3) \quad \log \rho^{RS}(t) = \sum_{j=0}^{n+1} a_j t^j + b \log t + o(1).$$

The coefficient  $a_0$  is calculated in [BFK3] in terms of the parametrix of the Laplace-Beltrami operator.

In the present paper we shall calculate all coefficients in the asymptotic expansion [BFK3]. In fact, we shall show that the coefficients  $a_j = 0$  for  $j > 1$  and the coefficient  $b$  is a half integer.

**0.4.** To formulate our result, we need to introduce some notation (cf. [BZ1]).

Let  $\nabla^{TM}$  be the Levi-Civita connection on  $TM$  corresponding to the metric  $g^{TM}$ , and let  $e(TM, \nabla^{TM})$  be the associated representative of the Euler class of  $TM$  in Chern-Weil theory.

Let  $\psi(TM, \nabla^{TM})$  be the Mathai-Quillen ([MQ])  $n - 1$  current on  $TM$  (see also [BGS, Section 3] and [BZ1, Section IIIId]).

Let  $\nabla^F$  be the flat connection on  $F$  and let  $\theta(F, g^F)$  be the 1-form on  $M$  defined by (cf. [BZ1, Section IVd])

$$(0.4) \quad \theta(F, g^F) = \text{Tr} \left[ (g^F)^{-1} \nabla^F g^F \right].$$

Set

$$(0.5) \quad \begin{aligned} \chi(F) &= \sum_{i=0}^n (-1)^i \dim H^i(M, F), \\ \chi'(F) &= \sum_{i=0}^n (-1)^i i \dim H^i(M, F). \end{aligned}$$

Let  $\rho^{\mathcal{M}}$  be the torsion of the Thom-Smale complex (cf. Section 1).

**Theorem 0.5.** *The function  $\log \rho^{RS}(t)$  admits an asymptotic expansion for  $t \rightarrow \infty$  of the form*

$$(0.6) \quad \log \rho^{RS}(t) = a_0 + a_1 t + b \log \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right) + o(1),$$

where the coefficients  $a_0, a_1$  and  $b$  are given by the formulas

$$(0.7) \quad a_0 = \log \rho^{\mathcal{M}} - \frac{1}{2} \int_M \theta(F, g^F) (\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM});$$

$$(0.8) \quad a_1 = -\text{rk}(F) \int_M f e(TM, \nabla^{TM}) + \chi'(F);$$

and

$$(0.9) \quad b = \frac{n}{4} \chi(F) - \frac{1}{2} \chi'(F).$$

*Remark 0.6.* Note that  $\chi(F) = 0$  if  $n$  is odd. Hence, (0.9) implies that the coefficient  $b$  is a half integer for any  $n$ .

**0.7. The method of the proof.** Our method is completely different from that of [BFK3]. In [BFK3] the asymptotic expansion (0.3) is proved by direct analytic arguments and, then is applied to get a new proof of the Ray-Singer conjecture [RS].

In the present paper we use the Bismut-Zhang extension of this conjecture ([BZ1]) in order to obtain the Theorem 0.5.

**Acknowledgments.** It is a great pleasure for me to express my deep gratitude to Michael Farber for bringing the papers [BFK2, BFK3] to my attention and for valuable discussions.

## 1. MILNOR METRIC AND MILNOR TORSION

In this section we follow [BZ1, Chapter I].

**1.1. The determinant line of the cohomology.** Let  $H^\bullet(M, F) = \bigoplus_{i=0}^n H^i(M, F)$  be the cohomology of  $M$  with coefficients in  $F$  and let  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$  be the line

$$(1.1) \quad \det H^\bullet(M, F) = \bigotimes_{i=0}^n \left( \det H^i(M, F) \right)^{(-1)^i}.$$

**1.2. The Thom-Smale complex.** Suppose  $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is a Morse function satisfying the Smale transversality conditions [Sm1, Sm2] (for any two critical points  $x$  and  $y$  of  $f$  the stable manifold  $W^s(x)$  and the unstable manifold  $W^u(y)$ , with respect to  $\nabla f$ , intersect transversally).

Let  $B$  be the set of critical points of  $f$ . If  $x \in B$ , we denote by  $F_x$  the fiber of  $F$  over  $x$  and by  $[W^u(x)]$  the real line generated by  $W^u(x)$ . For  $0 \leq i \leq n$ , set

$$(1.2) \quad C^i(W^u, F) = \bigoplus_{\substack{x \in B \\ \text{index}(x)=i}} [W^u(x)]^* \otimes_{\mathbb{R}} F_x.$$

By a basic result of Thom ([Th]) and Smale ([Sm2]) (see also [BZ1, pages 28–30]), there is a well defined linear operators

$$\partial : C^i(W^u, F) \rightarrow C^{i+1}(W^u, F),$$

such that the pair  $(C^\bullet(W^u, F), \partial)$  is a complex and there is a canonical identification of  $\mathbb{Z}$ -graded vector spaces  $H^\bullet(C^\bullet(W^u, F), \partial) \simeq H^\bullet(M, F)$ . By [KMμ] there is a canonical isomorphism

$$(1.3) \quad \det H^\bullet(M, F) \simeq \det C^\bullet(W^u, F).$$

**1.3. The Milnor metric.** The metric  $g^F$  on  $F$  determines the structure of Euclidean vector space on  $C^\bullet(W^u, F)$ .

**Definition 1.4.** The *Milnor metric*  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{\mathcal{M}}$  on the line  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$  is the metric corresponding to the obvious metric on  $\det C^\bullet(W^u, F)$  via the canonical isomorphism (1.3).

*Remark 1.5.* By Milnor [Mil, Theorem 9.3], if  $g^F$  is a flat metric on  $F$  then the Milnor metric coincides with the Reidemeister metric defined through a smooth triangulation of  $M$ . In this case  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{\mathcal{M}}$  does not depend upon  $F$  and  $g^{TM}$  and, hence, is a topological invariant of the flat Euclidean vector bundle  $F$ .

**1.6. The Milnor torsion.** Let  $\partial^*$  be the adjoint of  $\partial$  with respect to the Euclidean structure on  $C^\bullet(W^u, F)$ . Using the finite dimensional Hodge theory, we have the canonical identification

$$(1.4) \quad H^i(C^\bullet(W^u, F), \partial) \simeq \{v \in C^i(W^u, F) : \partial v = 0, \partial^* v = 0\}, \quad 0 \leq i \leq n.$$

As a vector subspace of  $C^i(W^u, F)$ , the vector space in the right-hand side of (1.4) inherits the Euclidean metric. We denote by  $|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{\mathcal{M}}$  the corresponding metric on  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$ .

The metrics  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{\mathcal{M}}$  and  $|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{\mathcal{M}}$  do not coincide in general. We shall describe the discrepancy.

Set  $\Delta = \partial\partial^* + \partial^*\partial$  and let  $P : C^\bullet(W^u, F) \rightarrow \text{Ker } \Delta$  be the orthogonal projection. Set  $\Pi^\perp = 1 - \Pi$ .

Let  $N$  and  $\tau$  be the operators on  $C^\bullet(W^u, F)$  acting on  $C^i(W^u, F)$  ( $0 \leq i \leq n$ ) by multiplication by  $i$  and  $(-1)^i$  respectively. If  $A \in \text{End}(C^\bullet(W^u, F))$ , we define the supertrace  $\text{Tr}_s[A]$  by the formula

$$(1.5) \quad \text{Tr}_s[A] = \text{Tr}[\tau A].$$

For  $s \in \mathbb{C}$ , set

$$\eta^\mathcal{M}(s) = -\text{Tr}_s \left[ N(\Delta)^{-s} \Pi^\perp \right].$$

**Definition 1.7.** The *Milnor torsion* is the number

$$(1.6) \quad \rho^\mathcal{M} = \exp \left( \frac{1}{2} \frac{d\eta^\mathcal{M}(0)}{ds} \right).$$

The following result is proved in [BGS, Proposition 1.5]

$$(1.7) \quad \|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^\mathcal{M} = |\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^\mathcal{M} \cdot \rho^\mathcal{M}.$$

**1.8. Deformation of Milnor metric.** The metric  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^\mathcal{M}$  depends on the metric  $g^F$ . Let  $g_t^F = e^{-2tf} g^F$  and let  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F),t}^\mathcal{M}$  be the corresponding Milnor metric. Set

$$(1.8) \quad \tilde{\chi}'(F) = \text{rk}(F) \sum_{x \in B} (-1)^{\text{index}(x)} \text{index}(x).$$

As  $f$  is a self-indexing Morse function

$$\text{rk}(F) \sum_{x \in B} (-1)^{\text{index}(x)} f(x) = \tilde{\chi}'(F).$$

Obviously,

$$(1.9) \quad \|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F),t}^\mathcal{M} = e^{-t\tilde{\chi}'(F)} \cdot \|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^\mathcal{M}.$$

## 2. RAY-SINGER METRIC AND RAY-SINGER TORSION

**2.1.  $L_2$  metric on the determinant line.** Let  $(\Omega^\bullet(M, F), d^F)$  be the de Rahm complex of the smooth sections of  $\Lambda(T^*M) \otimes F$  equipped with the coboundary operator  $d^F$ . The cohomology of this complex is canonically isomorphic to  $H^\bullet(M, F)$ .

Let  $*$  be the Hodge operator associated to the metric  $g^{TM}$ . We equip  $\Omega^\bullet(M, F)$  with the inner product

$$(2.1) \quad \langle \alpha, \alpha' \rangle_{\Omega^\bullet(M,F)} = \int_M \langle \alpha \wedge * \alpha' \rangle_{g^F}.$$

By Hodge theory, we can identify  $H^\bullet(M, F)$  to the corresponding harmonic forms in  $\Omega^\bullet(M, F)$ . These forms inherit the Euclidean product (2.1). Thus the line  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$  inherits a metric  $|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^{RS}$ , which is also called the  $L_2$  metric.

**2.2. The Ray-Singer torsion.** Let  $d^{F*}$  be the formal adjoint of  $d^F$  with respect to the metrics  $g^{TM}$  and  $g^F$ .

Set  $\Delta = d^F d^{F*} + d^{F*} d^F$  and let  $\Pi : \Omega^\bullet(M, F) \rightarrow \text{Ker } \Delta$  be the orthogonal projection. Set  $\Pi^\perp = 1 - \Pi$ .

Let  $N$  be the operator defining the  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading of  $\Omega^\bullet(M, F)$ , i.e.  $N$  acts on  $\Omega^i(M, F)$  by multiplication by  $i$ .

If an operator  $A : \Omega^\bullet(M, F) \rightarrow \Omega^\bullet(M, F)$  is trace class, we define its supertrace  $\text{Tr}_s[A]$  as in (1.5).

For  $s \in \mathbb{C}$ , set

$$\eta^{RS}(s) = -\text{Tr}_s \left[ N(\Delta)^{-s} \Pi^\perp \right].$$

By a result of Seeley [Se],  $\eta^{RS}(s)$  extends to a meromorphic function of  $s \in \mathbb{C}$ , which is holomorphic at  $s = 0$ .

**Definition 2.3.** The *Ray-Singer torsion* is the number

$$(2.2) \quad \rho^{RS} = \exp \left( \frac{1}{2} \frac{d\eta^{RS}(0)}{ds} \right).$$

**2.4. The Ray-Singer metric.** We now remind the following definition (cf. [BZ1, Definition 2.2]):

**Definition 2.5.** The *Ray-Singer metric*  $\| \cdot \|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{RS}$  on the line  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$  is the product

$$(2.3) \quad \| \cdot \|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{RS} = | \cdot |_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{RS} \cdot \rho^{RS}.$$

*Remark 2.6.* When  $M$  is odd dimensional, Ray and Singer [RS, Theorem 2.1] proved that the metric  $\| \cdot \|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{RS}$  is a topological invariant, i.e. does not depend on the metrics  $g^{TM}$  or  $g^F$ . Bismut and Zhang [BZ1, Theorem 0.1] described explicitly the dependents of  $\| \cdot \|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{RS}$  on  $g^{TM}$  and  $g^F$  in the case when  $\dim M$  is odd.

**2.7. Bismut-Zhang theorem.** Let  $\nabla^{TM}$  be the Levi-Civita connection on  $TM$  corresponding to the metric  $g^{TM}$ , and let  $e(TM, \nabla^{TM})$  be the associated representative of the Euler class of  $TM$  in Chern-Weil theory.

Let  $\psi(TM, \nabla^{TM})$  be the Mathai-Quillen ([MQ])  $n - 1$  current on  $TM$  (see also [BGS, Section 3] and [BZ1, Section IIId]).

Let  $\nabla^F$  be the flat connection on  $F$  and let  $\theta(F, g^F)$  be the 1-form on  $M$  defined by (cf. [BZ1, Section IVd])

$$(2.4) \quad \theta(F, g^F) = \text{Tr} \left[ (g^F)^{-1} \nabla^F g^F \right].$$

Now we remind the following theorem by Bismut and Zhang [BZ1, Theorem 0.2].

**Theorem 2.8 (Bismut-Zhang).** *The following identity holds*

$$(2.5) \quad \log \left( \frac{\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^{RS}}{\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^{\mathcal{M}}} \right)^2 = - \int_M \theta(F, g^F) (\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM}).$$

**2.9. Dependence on the metric.** The metrics  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^{RS}$  and  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^{\mathcal{M}}$  depend, in general, on the metric  $g^F$ . Let  $g_t^F = e^{-2tf} g^F$  and let  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F),t}^{RS}$  and  $\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F),t}^{\mathcal{M}}$  be the Ray-Singer and Milnor metrics on  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$  associated to the metrics  $g_t^F$  and  $g^{TM}$ .

By [BZ1, Theorem 6.3]

$$(2.6) \quad \int_M \theta(F, g_t^F) (\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM}) = \int_M \theta(F, g^F) (\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM}) + 2t \operatorname{rk}(F) \int_M fe(TM, \nabla^{TM}) - 2t \tilde{\chi}'(F).$$

From (1.9), (2.5) and (2.6), we get

$$(2.7) \quad \log \left( \frac{\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F),t}^{RS}}{\|\cdot\|_{\det H^\bullet(M,F)}^{\mathcal{M}}} \right)^2 = - \int_M \theta(F, g_t^F) (\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM}) - 2t \operatorname{rk}(F) \int_M fe(TM, \nabla^{TM}).$$

### 3. THE MAIN RESULT

In this section we prove Theorem 0.5, which we restate for convenience.

**Theorem 3.1.** *The function  $\log \rho^{RS}(t)$  admits an asymptotic expansion for  $t \rightarrow \infty$  of the form*

$$(3.1) \quad \log \rho^{RS}(t) = a_0 + a_1 t + b \log \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right) + o(1),$$

where the coefficients  $a_0, a_1$  and  $b$  are given by the formulas

$$(3.2) \quad a_0 = \log \rho^{\mathcal{M}} - \frac{1}{2} \int_M \theta(F, g^F) (\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM});$$

$$(3.3) \quad a_1 = - \operatorname{rk}(F) \int_M fe(TM, \nabla^{TM}) + \chi'(F);$$

and

$$(3.4) \quad b = \frac{n}{4} \chi(F) - \frac{1}{2} \chi'(F).$$

*Proof.* For each  $t > 0$  we equip  $\Omega^\bullet(M, F)$  with the inner product

$$(3.5) \quad \langle \alpha, \alpha' \rangle_{\Omega^\bullet(M, F), t} = \int_M \langle \alpha \wedge * \alpha' \rangle_{g_t^F}.$$

and we denote by  $|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F), t}^{RS}$  the  $L_2$  metric on  $\det H^\bullet(M, F)$  (cf. Section 2.1) associated to this inner product.

From (1.7), (2.3) and (2.7), we get

$$(3.6) \quad \log \rho^{RS}(t) = -\frac{1}{2} \int_M \theta(F, g^F)(\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM}) - \\ t \operatorname{rk}(F) \int_M fe(TM, \nabla^{TM}) + \log \rho^{\mathcal{M}} + \log \left( \frac{|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^{\mathcal{M}}}{|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F), t}^{RS}} \right).$$

Let  $d_t^{F*}$  be the formal adjoint of  $d^F$  with respect to the inner product (3.5). Set  $\Delta_t = d^F d_t^{F*} + d_t^{F*} d^F$ .

Let  $\Omega_t^{\bullet, [0, 1]}(M, F)$  be the direct sum of the eigenspaces of  $\Delta_t$  associated to eigenvalues  $\lambda \in [0, 1]$ . The pair  $(\Omega_t^{\bullet, [0, 1]}(M, F), d^F)$  is a subcomplex of  $(\Omega^\bullet(M, F), d^F)$ .

We denote by  $\|\cdot\|_{\Omega^\bullet(M, F)}$  the norm on  $\Omega^\bullet(M, F)$  determined by inner product (3.5), and by  $\|\cdot\|_{C^\bullet(W^u, F)}$  the norm on  $C^\bullet(W^u, F)$  determined by  $g^F$  (cf. Section 1.3).

In the sequel,  $o(1)$  denotes an element of  $\operatorname{End}(C^\bullet(W^u, F))$  which preserves the  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading and is  $o(1)$  as  $t \rightarrow \infty$ .

It is shown in [BZ2, Theorem 6.9] that if  $t > 0$  is large enough, there exists an isomorphism

$$e_t : C^\bullet(W^u, F) \rightarrow \Omega_t^{\bullet, [0, 1]}(M, F)$$

of  $\mathbb{Z}$ -graded Euclidean vector spaces such that

$$(3.7) \quad e_t^* e_t = 1 + o(1).$$

By [BZ2, Theorem 6.11], for any  $t > 0$  there is a quasi-isomorphism of complexes

$$P_t : \left( \Omega_t^{\bullet, [0, 1]}(M, F), d^F \right) \rightarrow \left( C^\bullet(W^u, F), \partial \right),$$

which induces the canonical isomorphism

$$(3.8) \quad H^\bullet(M, F) \simeq H^\bullet(\Omega_t^{\bullet, [0, 1]}(M, F), d^F) \simeq H^\bullet(C^\bullet(W^u, F), \partial)$$

and such that

$$(3.9) \quad P_t e_t = e^{tN} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/4 - N/2} (1 + o(1)).$$

Here  $e^{tN} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/4 - N/2}$  denotes the operator on  $C^\bullet(W^u, F)$  acting on  $C^i(W^u, F)$  by multiplication by  $e^{ti} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/4 - i/2}$ .

It follows from (3.9), that, for  $t > 0$  large enough,  $P_t$  is one to one.

From (3.7), (3.9) we get

$$(3.10) \quad P_t P_t^* = e^{2tN} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/2-N} (1 + o(1)).$$

Fix  $\sigma \in H^i(M, F)$  ( $0 \leq i \leq n$ ) and let  $\omega_t \in \text{Ker } \Delta_t$  be the harmonic form representing  $\sigma$ .

Let  $\Pi : C^\bullet(W^u, F) \rightarrow \text{Ker}(\partial\partial^* + \partial^*\partial)$  be the orthogonal projection. Then  $\Pi P_t \omega_t \in C^i(W^u, F)$  corresponds to  $\sigma$  via the canonical isomorphisms (1.4), (3.8).

Obviously,

$$(3.11) \quad P_t \omega_t \in \text{Ker } \partial, \quad e^{2ti} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/2-i} (P_t^*)^{-1} \omega_t \in \text{Ker } \partial^*.$$

By (3.10), we get  $e^{2ti} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/2-i} (P_t^*)^{-1} \omega_t = (1 + o(1)) P_t \omega_t$ . Then (3.11) implies

$$(3.12) \quad \|\Pi P_t \omega_t\|_{C^\bullet(W^u, F)} = \|P_t \omega_t\|_{C^\bullet(W^u, F)} (1 + o(1)).$$

From (3.10), (3.12) we obtain

$$(3.13) \quad \|\Pi P_t \omega_t\|_{C^\bullet(W^u, F)} = e^{ti} \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right)^{n/4-i/2} \|\omega_t\|_{\Omega^\bullet(M, F), t} (1 + o(t)).$$

It follows from (3.13) and from the definitions of the metrics  $|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^\mathcal{M}$ ,  $|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F), t}^{RS}$  that

$$(3.14) \quad \log \left( \frac{|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F)}^\mathcal{M}}{|\cdot|_{\det H^\bullet(M, F), t}^{RS}} \right) = t\chi'(F) + \left( \frac{n}{4}\chi(F) - \frac{1}{2}\chi'(F) \right) \log \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right) + o(1).$$

From (3.6), (3.14) we get

$$(3.15) \quad \begin{aligned} \log \rho^{RS}(t) = & -\frac{1}{2} \int_M \theta(F, g^F)(\nabla f)^* \psi(TM, \nabla^{TM}) - t \text{rk}(F) \int_M fe(TM, \nabla^{TM}) + \\ & \log \rho^\mathcal{M} + t\chi'(F) + \left( \frac{n}{4}\chi(F) - \frac{1}{2}\chi'(F) \right) \log \left( \frac{t}{\pi} \right) + o(1). \end{aligned}$$

The proof of Theorem 3.1 is completed.  $\square$

## REFERENCES

- [BGS] J.-M. Bismut, H. Gillet, C. Soulé, *Analytic torsion and holomorphic determinant bundles*, I, Comm. Math. Phys. **115** (1988) 49-78.
- [BZ1] J.-M. Bismut, W. Zhang, *An extension of a theorem by Cheeger and Müller*, Astérisque **205** (1992)
- [BZ2] ———, *Milnor and Ray-Singer metrics on the equivariant determinant of a flat vector bundle*, GAFA **4** (1994) 136-212.

- [BFK1] D. Burghelea, L. Friedlander, T. Kappeler, *Mayer-Vietoris type formula for determinants of elliptic differential operators*, Journal of Funct. Anal. **107** (1992) 34–65.
- [BFK2] ———, *Analytic torsion equals Reidemeister torsion, a new proof*, Preprint (1992), Ohio State University.
- [BFK3] ———, *Asymptotic expansion of the Witten deformation of the analytic torsion*, preprint, 1994.
- [Ch] J. Cheeger, *Analytic torsion and the heat equation*, Ann. of Math. **109** (1979) 259–300
- [DM] X. Dai, R.B. Melrose, *Adiabatic limit of the analytic torsion*, Preprint
- [Fa] M. Farber, *Singularities of analytic torsion*, Preprint (1993), Tel-Aviv University
- [KMμ] F.F. Knudsen, D. Mumford, *The projectivity of the moduli spaces of stable curves, I: Preliminaries on "det" and "div"*, Math. Scand. **39** (1976) 19–55.
- [MQ] V. Mathai, D. Quillen, *Superconnections, Thom class, and equivariant differential forms*, Topology **25** (1986) 85–110.
- [Mi1] J. Milnor, *Whitehead torsion*, Bull. AMS **72** (1966) 358–426
- [Mi2] ———, *A duality theorem for Reidemeister torsion*, Ann. of Math. **76** (1962), 137–147.
- [Mü1] W. Müller, *Analytic torsion and R-torsion on Riemannian manifolds*, Adv. in Math **28** (1978) 233–305
- [Mü2] ———, *Analytic torsion and R-torsion for unimodular representations*, Jour. of AMS **6** (1993) 721–753.
- [RS] D. Ray, I. Singer, *R-torsion and the Laplacian on Riemannian manifolds*, Adv. in Math **7** (1971) 145–210
- [Se] R. Seeley, *Complex powers of elliptic operators*, Proc. Symp. Pure and Appl. Math. AMS **10** (1967) 288–307
- [Sm1] S. Smale, *On gradient dynamical systems*, Ann. of Math. **74** (1961) 199–206.
- [Sm2] ———, *Differentiable dynamical systems*, Bull. Am. Math. Soc. **73** (1967) 747–817.
- [Th] R. Thom, *Sur une partition en cellules associée à une fonction sur une variété*, C.R. Acad. Sc. Paris, **Série A**, **228** (1949) 661–692.
- [Wi] E. Witten, *Supersymmetry and Morse Theory*, J. of Diff. Geom. **17** (1982) 661–692

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES, TEL-AVIV UNIVERSITY, RAMAT-AVIV 69978, ISRAEL  
*E-mail address:* maxim@math.tau.ac.il